Conversion of manual telephone exchange into electronic

†721. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of manual telephone exchanges in the country;

(b) whether there is any scheme to convert all the exchanges into electronic exchanges;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the amount likely to be incurred this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The number of manual telephone exchanges in the country is 'Nil'.

(b) All exchanges in the country in BSNL's network are electronic exchanges only.

(c) and (d) Not applicable in view of (b) above.

Merging of MTNL and BSNL

722. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have appointed any Advisor for synergising the operations of BSNL and MTNL;

(b) if so, what advice was given by the Advisor to Government; and

(c) by when the Minister propose to merge MTNL and BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD):

(a) Yes, Sir. A consortium of Consultants has been appointed.

(b) The Advisor is yet to submit a report to the Government.

(c) Government has not yet taken any decision regarding merger of MTNL and BSNL.

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.